

The
COLONIAL NEWSLETTER
A Research Journal in Early American Numismatics

Volume 53, Number 1

April 2013

Serial Number 151



Editorial

Pages 3985–3986



Roger A. Moore

“Capped Head”:

A Family of Counterfeit Halfpence

Pages 3987–4005

Roger A. Moore

“Flaming Sprig”:

A Family of Counterfeit Halfpence

Pages 4006–4011



Oliver D. Hoover

Colonial Coins in the ANS Collection

Plate Series:

*FUGIO, Connecticut, and New Jersey,
Coppers, and Massachusetts Bay Silver*

Part 9

Pages 4012–4024

The Colonial Newsletter (CNL) is published three times a year by The American Numismatic Society (ANS), 75 Varick Street, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10013. *CNL* is available at the rate of \$45 per year for ANS members and \$60 per year for non-members. For inquiries concerning *CNL*, please contact Viviana Londono at the above postal address: e-mail <membership@numismatics.org>; telephone (212) 571-4470 ext. 117, or FAX (212) 571-4479. One can subscribe to *CNL* online or download a subscription form from the ANS website at <www.numismatics.org/CNL/CNL>.

ANS Executive Director: Dr. Ute Wartenberg Kagan

Editor Emeritus: James C. Spilman

***CNL* Staff**

Editor: Oliver D. Hoover <CNL@numismatics.org>

Contributing Editor: Philip L. Mossman, M.D.

Associate Editor: Dr. Louis E. Jordan

Associate Editor: Dr. John M. Kleeberg

Associate Editor: John J. Kraljevich, Jr.

Associate Editor: Gary Trudgen

Curatorial Assistant: Sylvia Karges

Visit the ANS website at <www.numismatics.org> and the *CNL* web page at <www.numismatics.org/CNL/CNL>.



Submitting Material for Publication

We encourage our readers to consider submitting material on early North American numismatics to *CNL* for publication. In general, this includes coins, tokens, paper money, and medals that were current before the U.S. Federal Mint began operations in 1793. However, there are certain pieces produced after the 1793 date that have traditionally been considered part of pre-Federal numismatics and should be included. We cover all aspects of study regarding the manufacture and use of these items. Our very knowledgeable and friendly staff will assist potential authors to finalize submissions by providing advice concerning the text and help with illustrations. Submissions in either electronic or hard copy format, should be sent to the editor via the e-mail address given above or through the ANS at their postal address. Electronic text submissions should be formatted in Word with separate grayscale images.



Editorial

It's that time of year again. The cold and dark days of winter are giving way to the arrival of spring. In Vermont, the chill is leaving the morning air when the sun rises above the Green Mountains; in Massachusetts, people dance in the streets and leap spread-eagled in celebration of the end of winter; elsewhere in New England, there is a new CONNECTION with the outside world after a long winter indoors; and in New Jersey, farmers ready their horses and plows for the season of planting. Spring is the time when we provide the basis for and look forward to the season of fruitfulness to come in the summer and fall. One might also get the subtle impression that it is a time for Colonial coins.

As it turns out, 2013 looks to be an exceptionally fruitful year for Colonial numismatics in terms of reading material. In addition to the usual three issues of *The Colonial Newsletter* that come in a year, two new and important books are on the horizon. I have had the great honor to work with the authors in preparing their respective manuscripts. I am happy to report that at the time of writing the transfer of the laid out books to the printer is imminent.

The first of these books is the long-awaited and highly anticipated *New Jersey State Coppers* by Roger Siboni, Jack Howes, and Buell Ish. Most readers will be aware of the monumental work that these three men have put in over more than a decade with the support of many others in the NJ collecting community. The fruit of their labors—a fully updated treatment

of the history and attribution of New Jersey coppers worthy to follow in the footsteps of Dr. Edward Maris—will soon be at hand. There can be little doubt that this will become the new standard reference work for the study of New Jersey coppers.

The second book is dedicated to the bitter fruit that grows from the weed of one particular crime—counterfeiting. Like the Shadow himself, former *CNL* editor, Phil Mossman, roots out the causes, methods, personalities, and products of late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century counterfeiting in *From Crime to Punishment: Counterfeit and Debased Coinage in Colonial and Pre-Federal America*. This work will be of great interest even to those who are not collectors of contemporary counterfeits as it provides an extensive background to the problem of counterfeiting that was so pervasive and ultimately destructive in early America.

The world of the eighteenth-century counterfeiter is the primary theme of this issue of *The Colonial Newsletter* as well. Here, Roger Moore expands the number of published counterfeit British halfpenny Families by presenting the so-called “Capped Head” and “Flaming Sprig” Families.

In addition, we also continue the series of plates describing and illustrating the ANS holdings of FUGIO coppers (Newman 12-Z to 15-Y), Connecticut coppers (Miller 7.1-D to 8-D), New Jersey coppers (Maris 38-Y to 38-

c), and Massachusetts Bay silver (Willow Tree shillings, sixpences, and threepences).

Oliver D. Hoover
CNL@numismatics.org

**“Capped Head”:
A Family of Counterfeit Halfpence
by
Roger A. Moore, MD; Moorestown, NJ**

Introduction

In 1990, William Anton Jr. and Bruce Kesse drew attention to the numerous and largely uncategorized British and Irish counterfeit halfpence and farthings in their publication, *Forgotten Coins of the North American Colonies*.¹ The book seemed to be a random listing of counterfeit coppers but based upon their inventory, a number of counterfeit Families have grown. A Family is determined on the basis of die sharing, punch sharing and stylistic similarities that would indicate the same die cutter's hand at work.² One such Family is the “Capped Head” Family. Members of this Family have previously been referred to as part of the AK-19 Family. The AK designation refers to Anton and Kesse's book and 19 is the number of the coin in its plates.

As with all the identified Families, there is a certain level of frustration in attempting a die variety classification.³ Despite a dedicated group of individuals working together to elucidate the Families based on coins in their holdings, there can be no expectation that all the relevant coins in each Family are presently available for study. In fact, one of the previously described Families—the “Lanky Letters”—has been expanded by a few new coins since it was published.⁴ So why go to the effort of developing these Families, when the realization exists that they may well be incomplete? The reason for this effort is to provide a basic framework for future numismatists to build upon; there will most likely be additional varieties found for each Family. Even the colonial state coinages are still having new discoveries made but this does not negate the initial work that went into defining these coinages. Any step toward bringing order to the present chaos associated with the counterfeit copper coinage is in my view a welcome change. The greater the attention given to these coins, the greater the chance that collectors will look at coins they own and discover new varieties.

“Capped Head” Family Characteristics

The “Capped Head” Family is held together by extensive die-sharing among the varieties. Only one variety (4-D) is a stand-alone, meaning that its one obverse and reverse were never married to any other dies. The die-sharing is not limited only to obverses and reverses that have the characteristics of the “Capped Head” Family, but a large group also shares its dies with other counterfeit Families. Coins in this last group are considered mules. The dichotomy between coins struck entirely within the “Capped Head” Family and mules is illustrated by the plates. Plate 1 contains Family members exhibiting only the “Capped Head” Family traits. Plate 2 illustrates only varieties with a “Capped Head” Family obverse (for the “Capped Head” Family the only muled side presently known is the reverse), with a non-Family member reverse. The interconnections between “Capped Head” Family members and mules appear in plate 3. This plate is the most useful for attributing counterfeits in this Family.

1 W. T. Anton, Jr. and B. Kesse, *The Forgotten Coins of the North American Colonies* (Woodcliff Publishing Corp., 1990).

2 C. Schettino, B. Weston, J. Spilman, and G. Trudgen, *The Categorization of Counterfeit British & Irish 1/2d & 1/4d of George II & III—A Preliminary Progress Report on Family Groups & Subgroups* (The Colonial Newsletter Foundation, Inc., 2002).

3 R. Moore, “Lanky Letters: A Family of Counterfeit Halfpence,” *CNL* 142 (April 2010): 3521–3535; R. Moore, “Swollen Jowls: A Family of Counterfeit Halfpence,” *CNL* 146 (August 2011): 3762–3783.

4 R. Moore, “Lanky Letters: A Family of Counterfeit Halfpence,” *CNL* 142 (April 2010): 3521–3535.

“Capped Head” Family (Plate 1)

Full members of the “Capped Head” Family show many striking similarities in legend lettering, device style, and design. It is notable that the “Capped Head” Family shares many of the characteristics of the “Long Neck” Family. When these two Families were first distinguished from each other varieties were often confused.⁵ From the four obverses and the four reverses, a total of seven varieties exist due to die sharing.

Obverses: The busts of the king on all four obverses have long, sloping, and slightly concave foreheads. Similarly, the area between the nose and chin is concave in all instances and the nose prominent. The shape of the mouth almost makes it look like King George III is frowning. What gives this Family its name however, is the rounded, almost hemispheric shape of the back of the king’s head on all obverses. The combination of this round skull and the laurel leaves coming off the forehead give the rough impression of a baseball cap. All central devices have a mailed bust right, and within the armor below the neck is a centrally placed medallion. Obverses 1 and 2 seem to share the same well-formed medium-sized letter punches while obverses 3 and 4 appear to have employed a different set of punches. These punches, which were also well-formed, were larger and seem to be the same as those used for all the “Capped Head” Family reverse legends. Differentiation between the four obverses is fairly easy since each has a distinct look. In addition, using the position between the tip of the nose and the legend is also very helpful in distinguishing one obverse from another. On obverse 2 there is a large and dramatic die break. No examples of this variety are known without the die break. Since only three coins with the obverse paired with two reverses are known, the life of this obverse die may well have been very short. (see Table 1, below)

Reverses: All four members of the Family are dated 1775 and feature a consistency in the size and shape of the numbers used to punch the date. The number 5 in the date is large, open, and slanted to the right. Likewise, the same letter punches seem to have been used to make the legends in all four reverses and correspond to the punches used to make the legends on obverses 3 and 4. One startling discovery is that all reverse legends, except for reverse D, include a stop after BRITAN. This is not found in any other Families that have been studied, including the “Long Neck” Family. In addition, this stop is not seen in any of the muled reverses of the “Capped Head” Family. There is a consistency in the treatment of the figure of Britannia on reverses A, B, and D. For these reverses, Britannia is well formed with a long neck, round head with a hair bun, and a long index finger on her left hand, extending up the spear shaft. On reverse C, Britannia’s neck seems to be longer than the others and her head not as comely. All four reverses show similar folds in Britannia’s dress and she holds a small sprig in her right hand. The shields on all four reverses are also quite similar.

“Capped Head” Family Mules (Plate 2)

The mulings in the “Capped Head” Family consist of only two of the previous described member obverses (1 and 3) and an additional five obverses which are felt to be directly related to the “Capped Head” Family, but only found muled with four reverses from outside the “Capped Head” Family. Originally, consideration was given to dividing the “Capped Head” Family into two separate Families consisting of the “Capped Head” Family members and this group of mules. Such a division is still not out of the question as further varieties come to light, but the author made the decision to incorporate both into one larger Family for the present.

⁵ D. Palmer and B. Weston, “TN-210: The Long Neck Family of English Counterfeit Coppers,” *CNL* 145 (April 2011): 3713–3714.

Obverses: Obverses 1 and 3 were previously described above. The five new obverses on plate 2 have their own distinct look, though all have the same rounded skull, which, in conjunction with the laurel leaves, gives the appearance of a baseball cap. For instance, obverses 5 and 7 are similar where the head of the king in each instance is small and the forehead convex. The legend lettering on these two obverses seems to be a mix of the small neat letters and larger letters. Obverse 6 has a relatively large head for King George III and the legend lettering is more of the large letter style seen in the first four “Capped Head” Family member obverses. Obverses 8 and 9 have King George III’s head similar in size to the obverses on the “Capped Head” Family plate and both have the typical concave foreheads. Legend lettering is the same for both these varieties and corresponds to the small letter legends of obverses 1 and 2. Notably, both obverses 8 and 9 have a small die break or cut on the back of the king’s head between the letters V and S in GEORGIVS, but the angle of the cut is different on each. These two obverses only come paired with the reverse b mule and both were thought to be the same variety until a high grade example of obverse 9 was found that showed the differences in the hair waves, the curls on the neck, and the form of the mouth.

Reverses: According to the evolving conventions for identifying counterfeit halfpenny Families, when a Family member reverse is found paired with an obverse from outside the family, it is designated by a lower case letter. When discussed outside the framework of a specific Family, such a coin would be identified with the Family name abbreviation (such as CH for “Capped Head”), in which it was muled followed by the small letter designation. Thus, the “Capped Head” 1-a variety would be known as CH 1-a, and the reverse alone would be known as CH a. However, since that reverse is also a primary Family member in another Family—in the case of the a reverse, the “*Georgivs Triumpho*” Family—that same reverse will eventually receive another primary Family designation when that Family is fully evaluated and published. In the case of the primary Family designation, the reverse will be given a GT (“*Georgivs Triumpho*”) and capital letter designation, in addition to the CH designation, in order to fully document the use of this reverse die.

“*Georgivs Triumpho*” Family Reverse Mules: Three of the 1775-dated muled reverses of the “Capped Head” Family (a, b, and c) are derived from the so-called “*Georgivs Triumpho*” Family. This Family was first described and named by Mike Ringo based on the similarity between the images of King George III on the counterfeit halfpence and on *Georgivs Triumpho* tokens.⁶ Additional work has led to the identification of the “Notch Nose” variety in the *Georgivs Triumpho* Family,⁷ but the Family as a whole has yet to be fully explored and documented. Because of this there are presently no GT designations for the three *Georgivs Triumpho* Family reverses that are paired with the “Capped Head” Family obverses. Nevertheless, one can see the similarities of the three reverses (a, b, and c) in plate 2. Legend lettering, the size and shapes of the numbers in the dates, and the general appearance of Britannia on all three are very much alike. The location of the sprigs in relationship to the legend does differ and provides an easy way to distinguish one reverse from the other. Of particular importance for these three reverses, as well as for most 1775 “*Georgivs Triumpho*” reverses, is the number 5 in the date that could easily be mistaken for a 6. In fact, a number of coins in the “*Georgivs Triumpho*” Family have a 1776 or 1775 date with a small line etched into the die apparently making a 6 out of the 5. This anomaly has been discussed previously by Byron Weston and may actually represent an attempt to make a 5 out of a 6.⁸

6 M. Ringo, “The *Georgivs Triumpho* Token,” *CNL* 100 (July 1995): 1515–1520.

7 J. Louis and R. Moore, “The Notch Nose Variety in the *Georgivs Triumpho* Family of Counterfeit Halfpence—Spalling Warts take their Toll,” *C4 Newsletter* 20.3 (Fall 2012): 53.

8 B. Weston, “Corrected Date Counterfeit Halfpence,” *CNL* 121 (December 2002): 2407–2409.

It is interesting to speculate on why three of the four mule reverses are *Georgivs Triumpho*. Are the GT and CH Families directly related through the die-sinkers and counterfeiters or through the minting operation? The obvious conclusion might be that the operations producing the “*Georgivs Triumpho*” and the “Capped Head” Families were one and the same. However, the “*Georgivs Triumpho*” Family is very large and the number and varieties of coins are extensive. The “Capped Head” Family by comparison is quite small. Therefore, it might well be that one counterfeiting operation was closed down and the few remaining dies from that operation were brought into service at a new operation. Some insight into the sequential use of dies from different Families is provided in the “Emission Sequence” section below.

One last observation about the *Georgivs Triumpho* Family mules is that one of them (reverse a) occurs with only one “Capped Head” Family member (obverse 1), while the other two reverses (b and c) are each mated with two different obverses.

“Coin z” Family Reverse Mule: To confuse the picture of how the mules are related to the “Capped Head” Family, one of the muled reverse dies (reverse d) is from an entirely different Family. Bob Bowser astutely recognized the similarities of reverse d with an incompletely explored and presently undocumented Family called the “Coin z” Family.⁹ The “Coin z” Family derives from the very early work of Peck, who recognized the existence of five different counterfeit halfpence.¹⁰ One of the five coins was called Coin z. Based primarily on characteristics of the obverse of the Peck coin, a Family has been recognized, but not studied in depth yet. By comparing the reverses of other “Coin z” Family members with the muled reverse d of the “Capped Head” Family, Bowser provided evidence of the relationship between reverse d and the “Coin z” Family. One can see that the legend letters of reverse d—particularly the Rs and Ns—differ significantly from the “*Georgivs Triumpho*” Family reverses but interestingly, seem to be more similar to the “Capped Head” Family reverses. The appearance of the date is also significantly different, though the 5 is also found with a line in the die making the 5 into a 6. (see fig. 1) The similarity in the treatment of the number 5 in the dates of the “*Georgivs Triumpho*” and “Coin z” Families, as well as the muling of reverses from these Families with obverses of the “Capped Head” Family, adds to the speculation that these three Families might have been produced at the same site.



Figure 1. Date detail of a “Coin z” Family reverse used as muled reverse d in the “Capped Head” Family. The enlargement shows a number 5 that looks like a number 6. A similar 5 out of 6 frequently occurs in the dates of the “*Georgivs Triumpho*” Family as well. Courtesy of Jeff Rock.

Combined “Capped Head” Family and Mule Die Sharing (Plate 3)

The only purpose for providing this plate is to show on one page the extensive die sharing which is a hallmark of the “Capped Head” Family and related mules. The only “Capped Head” Family variety not illustrated here is the stand-alone pairing 4-D, which is illustrated in plate 1. Plate 3 is the plate most collectors will use to identify a variety that they have found, since it includes both actual “Capped Head” Family members and mules. As can be seen, based on all the die sharing there are a total of 16 die-paired varieties in this complex Family.

⁹ Bob Bowser email with subject line “Capped Head Family” (September 17–18, 2012) within the Non-Regal Yahoo Group (nonregalresearch@yahoogroups.com).

¹⁰ C. Wilson Peck, *English Copper, Tin and Bronze Coins in the British Museum, Trustees of the British Museum*, 2nd ed. (London, 1970).

Obverse Mule Connections to “Capped Head” Related Reverse Mules (Plate 4)

Because four of the reverses in the “Capped Head” Family are mules, one might expect to find coins from the original Family in which the mule resides with an obverse from that Family. In other words, one of the “*Georgivs Triumpho*” reverses in the “Capped Head” Family (a, b, and c) might be found with a “*Georgivs Triumpho*” Family obverse. All three of the “*Georgivs Triumpho*” reverses muled with “Capped Head” Family obverses are found with true “*Georgivs Triumpho*” obverses. Plate 4 shows the “*Georgivs Triumpho*” obverses that have a direct relationship through die sharing with CH a, CH b, and CH c. As previously stated, each of these reverses will eventually get a GT designation with a capital letter once that Family is developed. It is interesting that at least one specific obverse could be identified for each of these reverses. Even more interesting is the fact that two different obverses were discovered paired with reverse b and one of these also served as one of the three obverses paired with reverse c. Also of interest is four of the five “*Georgivs Triumpho*” obverses paired with these three reverses are different from one another, but even more interesting is that one of the obverse dies is shared with two of the “*Georgivs Triumpho*” reverses used as mules in the “Capped Head” Family. Finally, the obverse paired with reverse a is quite distinctive from the others with a cruder expression on the king’s face.

More problematic is the single “Coin z” reverse mule—reverse d. As yet no “Coin z” Family obverse has been found paired with this “Coin z” reverse. That is not to say that a continued search will not reveal such a combination, but rather, that for the moment it eludes us.

Die States

In spite of the relatively few coins found for each variety in the “Capped Head” Family, there is a surprisingly large number of both obverses and reverses in various die states. However, not all varieties show die state differences. The more that show such differences, the easier it is to develop a hypothesis concerning variety emission sequences. The emission sequence will be discussed in a separate section.

“Capped Head” Obverse Die States (Plate 5)

Obverse 1: The die states of obverse 1 are distinguished by die clashing. In the Late Die State (LDS) there is evidence of clashing over the king’s head representing a mirror image of the area below Britannia, including the date.¹¹ The Early Die State (EDS) coins lack this impression. Obverse 1 comes with two reverses (A and a). All known examples (five in total) of the 1-A variety are free of clash marks, while among examples of the 1-a pairing, two free of the clash marks and eight have them. A number of coins could not be evaluated because their condition was too low to permit certainty about their die states. Based on these observations it would seem that all 1-A varieties were minted prior to most of the 1-a varieties, although the obverse 1 die lacked evidence of clashing for a period of time while the 1-a variety was minted. In addition we can conclude that the clashed die was most likely made with reverse a, since it appears to have been the one in service when the clashing occurred.

Obverse 3: The LDS shows a large die break that involves the ordinal number and the R in REX, but the EDS does not show this die break. Obverse 3 comes paired with four reverses (A, B, C, and d). Both 3-A examples have a LDS obverse and all seven varieties of 3-B are EDS examples of obverse 3. The three examples of varieties 3-C and one example of 3-d seem to show the die break in an intermediate state. Therefore, we can conclude that variety 3-B was

¹¹ For die clashing and other errors, see R. Moore and P. Mossman, “Die Clashing, Die Caps, and Brockages,” *CNL* 130 (April 2006): 2983–2993.

minted first and then followed by both 3-C and 3-d, and finally by variety 3-A. This observation somewhat confuses the view that “*Georgivs Triumpho*” reverse dies being introduced to the “Capped Head” counterfeiting operation late in the operation since the above minting sequence implies that reverse A—a primary “Capped Head” Family member—was brought into service after the “*Georgivs Triumpho*” reverse d had been used. However, one should note that since only a single 3-d coin is presently known, the mintage was most likely minimal. The question of minting sequence and the introduction of the “*Georgivs Triumpho*” dies into use for the “Capped Head” Family is explored separately below.

Obverse 5: The key distinguishing feature of the LDS for obverse 5 is the die break on the chin of King George III. Interestingly, obverse 5 comes only paired with two “*Georgivs Triumpho*” reverses (b and c). In addition, both varieties are fairly rare with only five examples of 5-c and two of 5-b known. All five of the 5-c varieties are in the EDS and the single 5-b in high enough condition to evaluate is in the LDS. The obvious conclusion is that 5-c was minted prior to 5-b.

Obverse 6: Similar to obverse 5, obverse 6 comes paired only with “*Georgivs Triumpho*” reverses—in this case c and d. The LDS is distinguished by extensive “die rust.” This feature is not actually caused by the rusting of the die but rather by the chipping off of minor defects in the die’s metal during minting. This process is known as spalling.¹² The examples of the 6-c variety essentially all show some spalling and therefore represent either an intermediate (two coins) or LDS (two coins) in the life of the die. On the other hand, variety 6-d clearly involves four EDS examples with one intermediate and one LDS coin. All of this seems to indicate that the 6-d varieties were produced first and then both 6-c and 6-d varieties were minted until the obverse die was taken out of service.

Obverse 7: Since obverse 7 only occurs paired with reverse d, a “Coin z” reverse, changes in the die are not much help in relating emission sequences. On the other hand since this is one of the most common of the “Capped Head” varieties, the relative number existing in the various die states is of interest. There are three die states based on the presence or absence of a die break through the ribbons on the back of King George III’s head. A lack of the die break is an EDS, a small break is a Middle Die State (MDS) and a full break is a LDS based on the coins in good enough condition for study. Eight coins are in the EDS, two are in the MDS, and seven are in the LDS. Some coins could not be evaluated. It would seem that obverse die 7 began breaking down somewhere near the middle of the production run.

“Capped Head” Reverse Die States (Plate 6)

Reverse B: Reverse B is found paired with obverses 2 and 3. The LDS shows a large die break behind Britannia’s head which is missing in the EDS. In regard to obverse 2 there is a single coin presently known and it has an EDS of reverse B. The variety 3-B has four EDS coins and three LDS coins. Therefore, though the number of coins to make any conclusions is thin, one might say the 2-B and 3-B varieties were minted about the same time and then after the B die broke, continued minting of the 3-Bs with the broken die occurred.

Reverse b: The LDS of reverse b is distinguished from the EDS by the presence of “die rust” or spalling damage. In the LDS, this damage is prominent to the right of Britannia. The “*Georgivs Triumpho*” reverse b is paired with obverses 5, 8, and 9. In evaluating the die states of these groupings, the single 5-b coin of high enough quality to identify the die state is in the EDS, while all eight of the 8-b varieties available for study are in the LDS. Some of the latter feature extensive spalling damage, but others less so. For variety 9-b, of the nine coins that can be

¹² See Moore and Louis (2013).

evaluated, all are in the EDS. Therefore, it is clear that the "*Georgivs Triumpho*" b reverse was first brought into service with the 5-b and 9-b pairings, and later used to make 8-b, during which time the die began to deteriorate. Reverse b used with "*Georgivs Triumpho*" Family members was also evaluated. Of the eight specimens studied, all were in the EDS, indicating that the full "*Georgivs Triumpho*" Family members were minted concurrently with or before production of the 9-b variety.

Reverse c: The die state differences in the reverse c falls into three phases. The EDS has no defects on the coin. The MDS has a small die break or spot just to the bottom left of the letter T in Britannia. This spot is small on some coins and larger on others. The LSD has, in addition to an enlarged spot, some extensive spalling. Reverse c is paired with obverses 5 and 6. Of interest the reverse c coins that are paired with a "*Georgivs Triumpho*" obverse are a combination of 3 EDS and 5 MDS. On the other hand, all four 5-c coins are MDS and for the four 6-c coins, one is MDS and three are LDS. Therefore, the progression of minting seems to have gone from the pure "*Georgivs Triumpho*" Family members during which time the die was injured, and then the reverse c die was used to make all the 5-c varieties. Finally the 6-c varieties were produced during which time the die deteriorated further.

Reverse d: Reverse d is the only muled reverse that is not a "*Georgivs Triumpho*" Family member. Rather the reverse d belongs in the "Coin z" Family and as yet no Coin z Family obverses have been found utilizing this reverse. The differentiation between EDS and LDS is based on the development of fairly extensive spalling in the LDS and a die break that extends from Britannia's face, through the first letter N in BRITANNIA. Reverse d comes muled with obverses 3, 6, and 7. Only one 3-d is presently known and its die state is difficult to evaluate though some spalling may be present. Of the six coins comprising variety 6-d, three are in the EDS, one is in the MDS and two are in the LDS. All 17 examples of 7-d that could be evaluated are in the EDS. Setting 3-d aside until other specimens become available, it seems that the 7-d variety was minted with the die in the EDS, but it began to deteriorate during the production of 6-d.

Die State Correspondence between Obverse/Reverse Combinations

One might expect that if there were some correspondence between the degradation of the obverse and reverse dies, the die states of both the obverse and reverse should correspond, as long as the dies were put into use at the same time and deteriorated at the same rate during use. As minting progressed and both dies suffered deterioration, one would expect that the last coins minted should have late die state obverses and late die state reverses. This would only be the case if deterioration occurred in both the obverse and reverse die at similar rates. In those die combinations where one of the two dies did not deteriorate, such evaluation could not be performed. In the "Capped Head" Family with mules die deterioration of both obverse and reverse dies occurred in six varieties: 3-B, 3-d, 5-b, 5-c, 6-d, and 7-d.

Die Combination 3-B: All six 3-B coins have an obverse in the EDS while four reverses are in the EDS and three are in the LDS. This indicates some dichotomy in the correspondence of die states in this variety where the obverse die retained its integrity longer than the reverse die.

Die Combination 3-d: The single coin known of this variety exhibits corresponding MDS die states on obverse and reverse.

Die Combination 5-b: The only specimen of this variety of high enough grade for evaluation features a dichotomy of die states. The obverse is in the LDS and the reverse is in the EDS. Therefore, die state correspondence does not exist in this variety.

Die Combination 5-c: The five obverses of this variety are all in the EDS and the reverses are in virtually the same MDS. Since no EDS reverses of c are known which are not paired with a “*Georgivs Triumpho*” obverse, this combination shows a consistency in die state correspondence between the obverse and reverse.

Die Combination 6-d: Of the six coins known of this variety, all exhibit corresponding die states. Three have both obverse and reverse in the EDS, one has both in the MDS, and one has both in the LDS. The only coin that does not feature corresponding die states involves a MDS obverse paired with a LDS reverse. Generally, there is good die state correspondence in this variety.

Die Combination 7-d: Of the 17 coins that can be evaluated, all the reverses are in the EDS while eight obverses are in the EDS, two are in the MDS and seven are in the LDS. Based on this information, it would seem that the reverse d die outlasted the obverse 7 die. It would also appear that the LDS reverse d varieties were minted after the 7-d variety.

General Comments on Die State Correspondence: The supposition is that when an obverse die and a reverse die both undergo deterioration in the minting process while making a single variety, there will be a correspondence in the obverse and reverse die states. This supposition is supported by the evidence presented and seems to be intuitively obvious; but the author has learned that with counterfeit halfpence even obvious suppositions must be tested. Of course not all varieties will have EDS obverses and reverses in the early coins minted, since one of the dies may have been previously used and may show deterioration. For instance in the 5-c variety, all reverses are a later die state than the obverses but that is because the reverse c never appears in the “Capped Head” Family in an EDS. The EDS is only found for the reverse c in its pairings with the “*Georgivs Triumpho*” obverses. The 6-d variety exhibits good correspondence between the EDS, MDS, and LDS, indicating that both obverse and reverse dies were breaking down at about the same rate.

Emission Sequence

Emission sequence considerations are fraught with speculation and assumptions. It would be nice to expect that counterfeiting operations were organized and concise in their use of dies and minting processes, but the picture obtained from the Old Bailey Court records indicate a more chaotic situation where dies may have been used one place, sold or transferred to another, and then dispersed even further.¹³ Dies might have been shelved for months or brought back into use randomly on a daily basis. No Family speaks to random die usage more than the “Capped Head” Family with its extensive die sharing, both within the primary Family and with the various mules. It is interesting to consider both when and how the “*Georgivs Triumpho*” and “Coin z” Family mules might have entered the “Capped Head” Family counterfeiting operation but definitive evidence is lacking. All we have to guide us is what the coins can tell us. Even then a nicely developed and supported theory could be laid to waste with the appearance of a few more new coins that point in a different direction. Nevertheless, we should not ignore the emission sequence evidence currently provided by the “Capped Head” Family.

Sequence of Primary Family Varieties: Looking at the obverse 1 die state data, we can see that all 1-A varieties are in the EDS with no LDS coins. Most of the 1-a varieties are also in LDS. Therefore a comfortable conclusion is all 1-As were minted before 1-a varieties.

1-A → 1-a mules

¹³ *The Proceedings of the Old Bailey, 1674–1913: London’s Central Criminal Court Records* online at <http://www.oldbaileyonline.org>; B. Bowser, “1748-dated Counterfeit British Halfpenny Source Identified,” CNL 131 (December 2007): 3207–3213.

When evaluating die state information about obverse 3, it was noted that all 3-B varieties were in the EDS, the three 3-Cs and one 3-d were in the MDS, and the two 3-A varieties were in the LDS. Since no LDS 2-B varieties are known and three LDS 3-Bs are known (both varieties occur in the EDS) then it is likely that the 2-B varieties were minted before the 3-B varieties, but this is not conclusive. Putting this information together with the obverse 3 information it would seem that a logical sequence would place the production of 2-B first, the minting of 3-B next or concurrently, followed by 3-C and the introduction of the "Coin z" reverse die d, and finally minting of the 3-A variety.

2B → 3-B → 3-C and 3-d mules → 3-A

The key point in these findings is that a die from outside the immediate "Capped Head" Family was introduced into the minting process before one of the "Capped Head" Family die combinations (3-A) had even been used. Additional information concerning emission sequences is provided below but any other conjectures about emission sequences without die state evidence to support the observations would be pure speculation.

"Georgivs Triumpho" Reverses Used First for "Georgivs Triumpho" Minting: Conceivably the *"Georgivs Triumpho"* reverses involved in the production of the "Capped Head" mules could have been used first in the "Capped Head" counterfeiting operation and then sent to the *"Georgivs Triumpho"* operation or vice versa. Logic would indicate the latter sequence but as said before, such obvious suppositions with counterfeits need proof. In evaluating the die states of reverse b, it became evident that all primary *"Georgivs Triumpho"* varieties (both obverse and reverse GT Family members) employ reverse b in its early die state. Similarly, it was observed that reverse b in an early die state was used in the minting of all 5-b and 9-b varieties. However, all 8-b varieties had a LDS reverse b. This serves as indirect evidence that the *"Georgivs Triumpho"* Family was minted either before the die was used in the CH operation or that the reverse b die was used concurrently. Most likely the reverse b die found its way into the "Capped Head" minting operation by some means after it was used to mint the *"Georgivs Triumpho"* coins. This would provide an emission sequence:

GT Family → 5-b and 9-b mules → 8-b mules

Additional, stronger evidence that the *"Georgivs Triumpho"* coins were minted first is provided by the reverse c die state analysis. The c reverse in the perfect die state has ONLY been found paired with a *"Georgivs Triumpho"* obverse. All 5-c varieties are in the MDS and most of the 6-c varieties are in the LDS. Clearly minting first took place in the *"Georgivs Triumpho"* counterfeiting operation (perhaps next door?) and then the reverse c die entered the "Capped Head" minting operation. The sequence of emission is therefore:

GT Family → 5-c mules → 6-c mules

If we assume that the *"Georgivs Triumpho"* mules were introduced later in the production of the "Capped Head" Family, then the CH 5 and 6 obverses were dies made later in the minting operation. Further study will be needed to confirm this speculation.

Oddities

Despite its many varieties, the "Capped Head" Family is well made and relatively free of errors in die design, lettering, and minting. A single brockage of the Family (obverse 6) is presently known (see fig. 2, below). Typical errors such as off center strikes, and double strikes seem

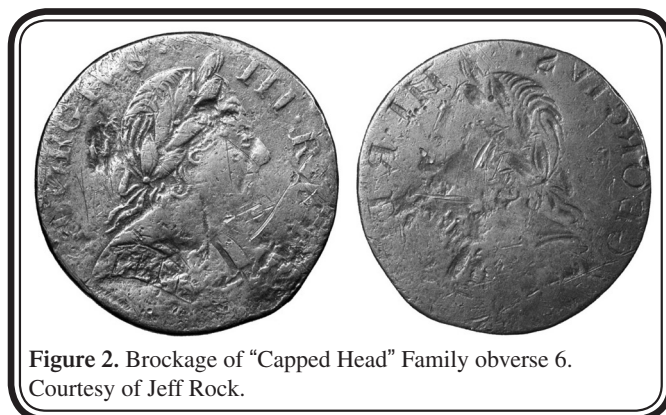


Figure 2. Brockage of "Capped Head" Family obverse 6.
Courtesy of Jeff Rock.

to be lacking. This would seem to indicate a fairly sophisticated minting operation for the production of the "Capped Head" Family.

Metrology

The metrological information for each of the "Capped Head" Family varieties and their mules is shown in Table 1 (below). The number of coins listed for each variety is also an indicator of relative rarity. One can see that of the 16 known varieties and mules that varieties 2-A, 2-B, 3-A, 3-C, 3-d, and 5-b are exceedingly rare with three or less examples presently known for each. In evaluating the die axis data, all coins in all varieties are oriented "coin turn." This speaks well for the minting operation's quality assurance. However, based on the known emission sequence, it would seem the planchet stock varied in weight throughout the minting process and was not subject to the same level of quality assurance. For instance, a planchet weight of 122.8 grains is found for the single 2-B which was minted prior to the 3-B with an average weight of 121.4 grains, followed by the minting of the 3-C (average weight of 125.2 grains) and the 3-d varieties (the only coin weights 114.1 grains), followed by the 3-A varieties with an average high weight of 133 grains. As the emission sequence progressed there seems to have been no consistent change in the weight of the planchets. This is also shown by a large variability in the ranges of the planchet weights within each variety. For variety 1-a, which is one of the most common of the varieties, the known weights swing from 99 grains to 130.2 grains. Overall, the average weight for all planchets for all varieties is 120.7 grains with a wide range of 99 to 149.8 grains. Unlike the planchet weight, the planchet diameter was more consistent for all varieties and there was little variability found. The average planchet diameter for all varieties was 28.2 mm with a range of 27.3 to 29.2 mm. Only one coin had a diameter greater than 29 mm and no coin was found with a diameter less than 27 mm.

One might hypothesize that the mules in this Family were minted at a different time and possibly with different planchet stock than the primary Family members, but this does not stand up under close scrutiny. Both mules and full Family members have similar weights and diameters. For instance, the average weight of the 1-A variety is 113.56 grains, while it is 125.1 grains for the 2-A variety, and 133 grains for the 3-A. Similarly, the 5-b has an average weight of 112.1 grains, while the 8-b variety has an average weight of 126.5 grains. Because of the variability in weights within and between varieties, no consistent pattern can be discerned to help elucidate the minting emission sequences.

Table 1: The Metrology of the “Capped Head” Family

Variety	Known Specimens	Average Weight	Weight Range	Number Weighed	Average Diameter	Diameter Range	Number Measured
1-A	5	113.5	109.6–116.5	4	28.4	28.2–28.7	4
1-a	17	114.6	99–130.2	15	28.1	27.5–28.7	14
2-A	2	125.1	124.7–125.4	2	28.4	28.3–28.4	2
2-B	1	122.8		1	28.5		1
3-A	2	133	129.6–136.3	2	27.9	27.9–27.9	2
3-B	7	121.4	113.7–126.4	5	28.1	27.7–28.4	5
3-C	3	125.2	125–125.6	3	27.9	27.8–28	3
3-d	1	114.1		1	28.1		1
4-D	11	117.2	109.6–126.2	11	28.2	27.5–28.5	11
5-b	2	112.1	111–113.2	2	27.9	27.5–28.4	2
5-c	4	130.7	111–149.8	3	28.6	28.3–29.2	3
6-c	4	127	120.5–133.9	4	28.1	28–28.2	4
6-d	6	124.4	120.6–127.5	4	28.1	27.9–28.3	4
7-d	20	121.4	102.4–134.4	10	28.2	27.8–28.5	9
8-b	9	126.5	114 –136.6	9	28.4	27.5–28.7	9
9-b	16	120.8	109.8–133.7	10	28.2	27.9–28.5	10
TOTAL	110	120.7	99–149.8	86	28.2	27.3–29.2	84

Conclusions

The “Capped Head” Family of British counterfeit halfpence is notable for the extensive use of reverses from other counterfeit Families and the cross-usage of dies between different obverses and reverses. All varieties are dated 1775. Four primary “Capped Head” Family obverse dies, four “Capped Head” Family reverse dies, three reverse dies from the “*Georgivs Triumpho*” Family and one reverse die from the “Coin z” Family were used in combination to make up the total of 16 “Capped Head” Family and mule varieties. Only one variety (4-D) does not exhibit die sharing based on known coins. The obverses are notable in that all have a hemispheric skull, which, in combination with the laurel wreath, gives the impression that King George III is wearing a baseball cap. The other notable characteristic is that on all non-mule reverses, except variety 4, there is a punctuation mark after BRITAN in the legend. The entire coinage is well made and minting errors are rare. However, there are many dies that were used long enough that die deterioration can be seen. This deterioration is very helpful in identifying the emission sequence for certain varieties. It would seem that the “*Georgivs Triumpho*” reverses used to make the “Capped Head” Family mules were first employed to make pure “*Georgivs Triumpho*” Family members before they were paired with dies from the “Capped Head” Family. Two of the three “*Georgivs Triumpho*” dies are found in early die states paired with “*Georgivs Triumpho*” obverses, while they are found in late die states when used to make the “Capped Head” Family mules.

Although some of the “Capped Head” Family varieties are quite rare, many are obtainable and fairly easily identifiable due to their distinct appearance. It is expected that other examples of each variety and perhaps even new varieties will appear over the next few years. The author would be pleased to receive notification and images of any new examples by email at rogermoore435@yahoo.com.

Acknowledgements

A special "thank you" is in order for members of the internet based Yahoo Colonial-Coin and Non-Regal Research groups who have made this paper possible by supplying images and information about their coins. Special contributors of information, editing, and images include Bob Bowser, Michael Briggs, Dan Burleson, Ed Foster, Morris Hankins, Bruce Kesse, John Louis, Marc Mayhugh, David Palmer, Bruce Smith, Mike Ringo (prior to his unfortunate and untimely death), Jeff Rock, Charles Rohrer, Rickie Rose, Clem Schettino, Roger Siboni, Byron Weston, Ray Williams (peace keeper), and Vicken Yegpagian. Special thanks also should go to Ed Foster for producing the initial plates and doing the first work on this Family. The active input in editing by Oliver Hoover must also be acknowledged.

Photo Credits***Plates 1–3 and reverses on Plate 4******Obverses:***

1. John Louis (plate 1) and author (plates 2–3).
2. Author.
3. David Palmer.
4. Author.
5. Author.
6. David Palmer.
7. Author.
8. John Louis.
9. Author

Reverses:

- A. Author.
- B. John Louis.
- C. Vicken Yepegian.
- D. Author.
 - a. Author.
 - b. Author.
 - c. Author.
 - d. Author.

Plate 4

- a. Author.
- b. Author.
- c. Author (with obverses 1 and 3) and Rickie Rose (with obverse 2).

Plates 5–6

- 1 EDS. John Louis.
- 1 LDS. Author.
- 3 EDS. John Louis.
- 3 LDS. David Palmer.
- 5 EDS. Author.

5 LDS. John Louis.
6 EDS. Jeff Rock.
6 LDS. Author.
7 EDS. Author.
7 MDS. Mike Ringo.
7 LDS. Author.
B EDS. John Louis.
B LDS. Author.
c EDS. Mike Ringo.
c LDS. Author.
d EDS. Mike Ringo.
d LDS. Author.

Plate 1: The “Capped Head” Family

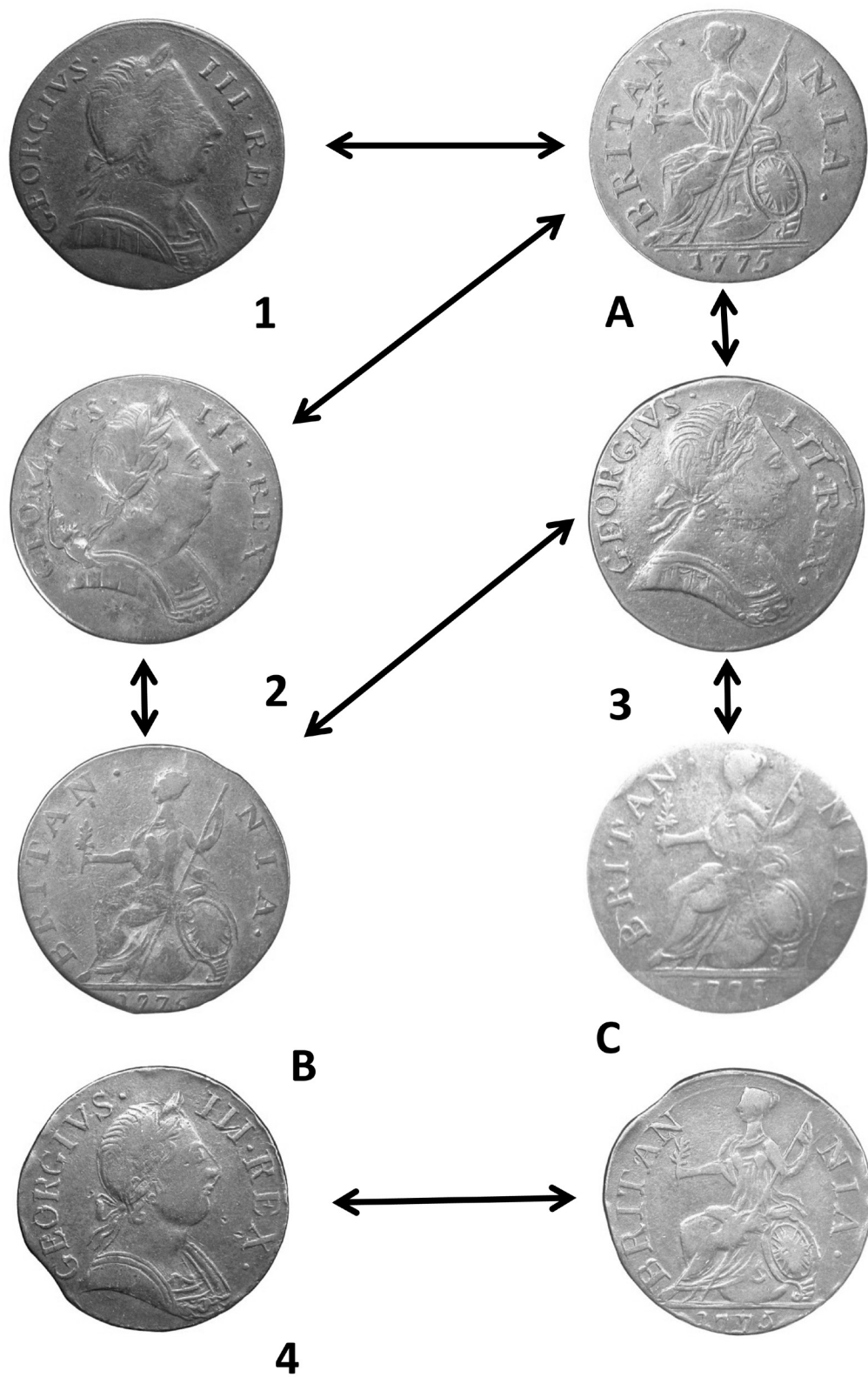


Plate 2: "Capped Head" Mules

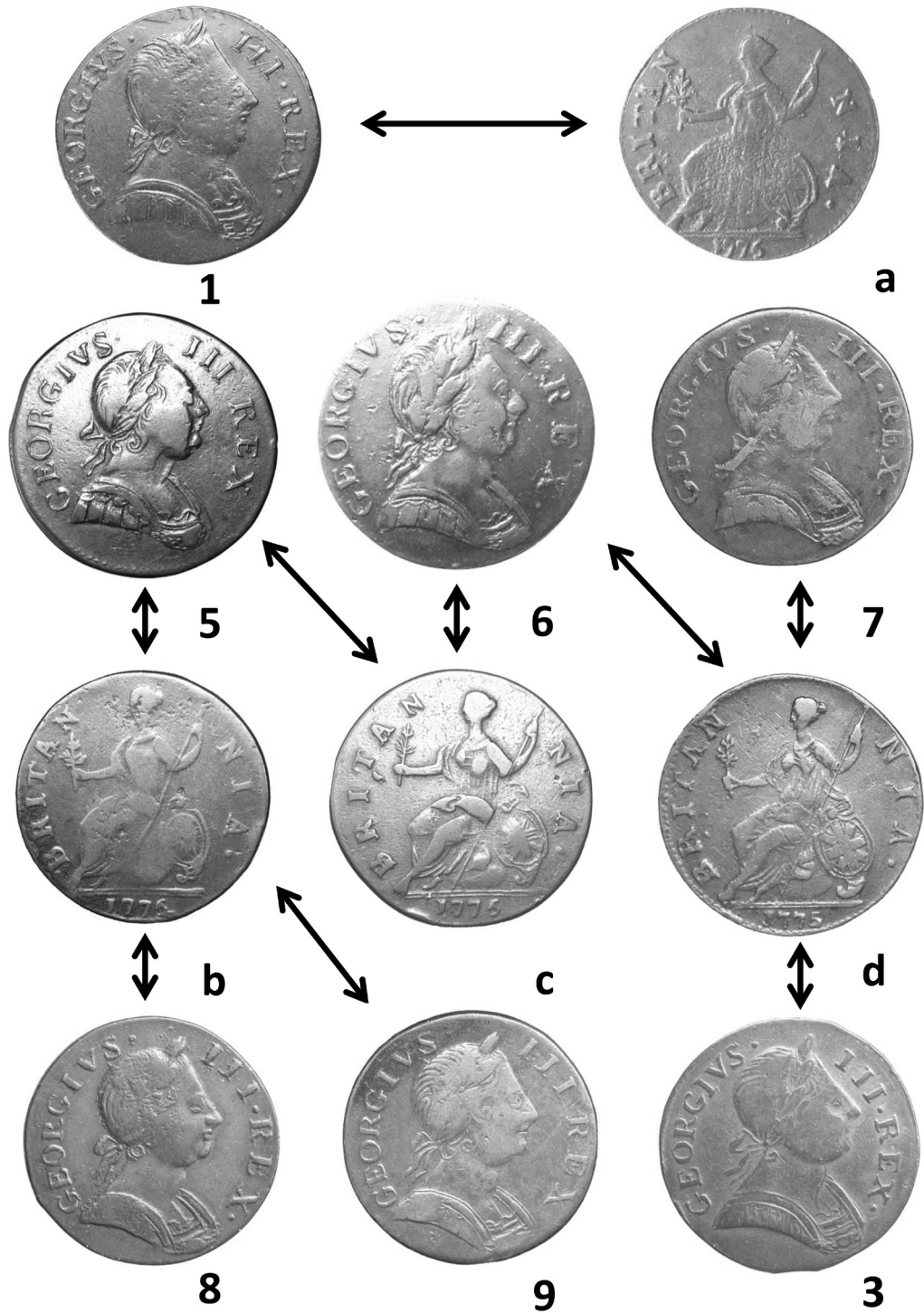


Plate 3: "Capped Head" Family and Mules Die Sharing

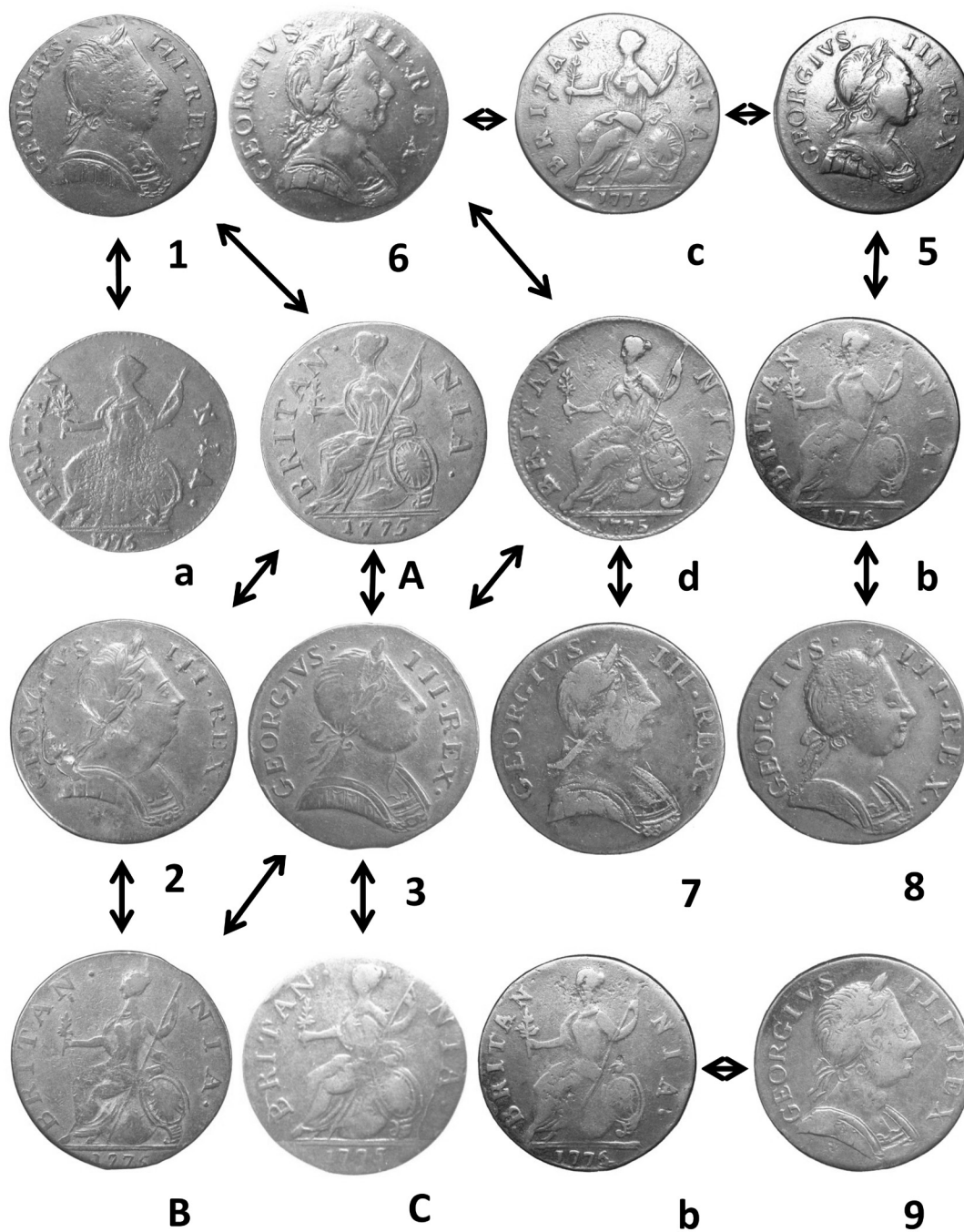


Plate 4: GT Obverse Connections to CH Reverse Mules

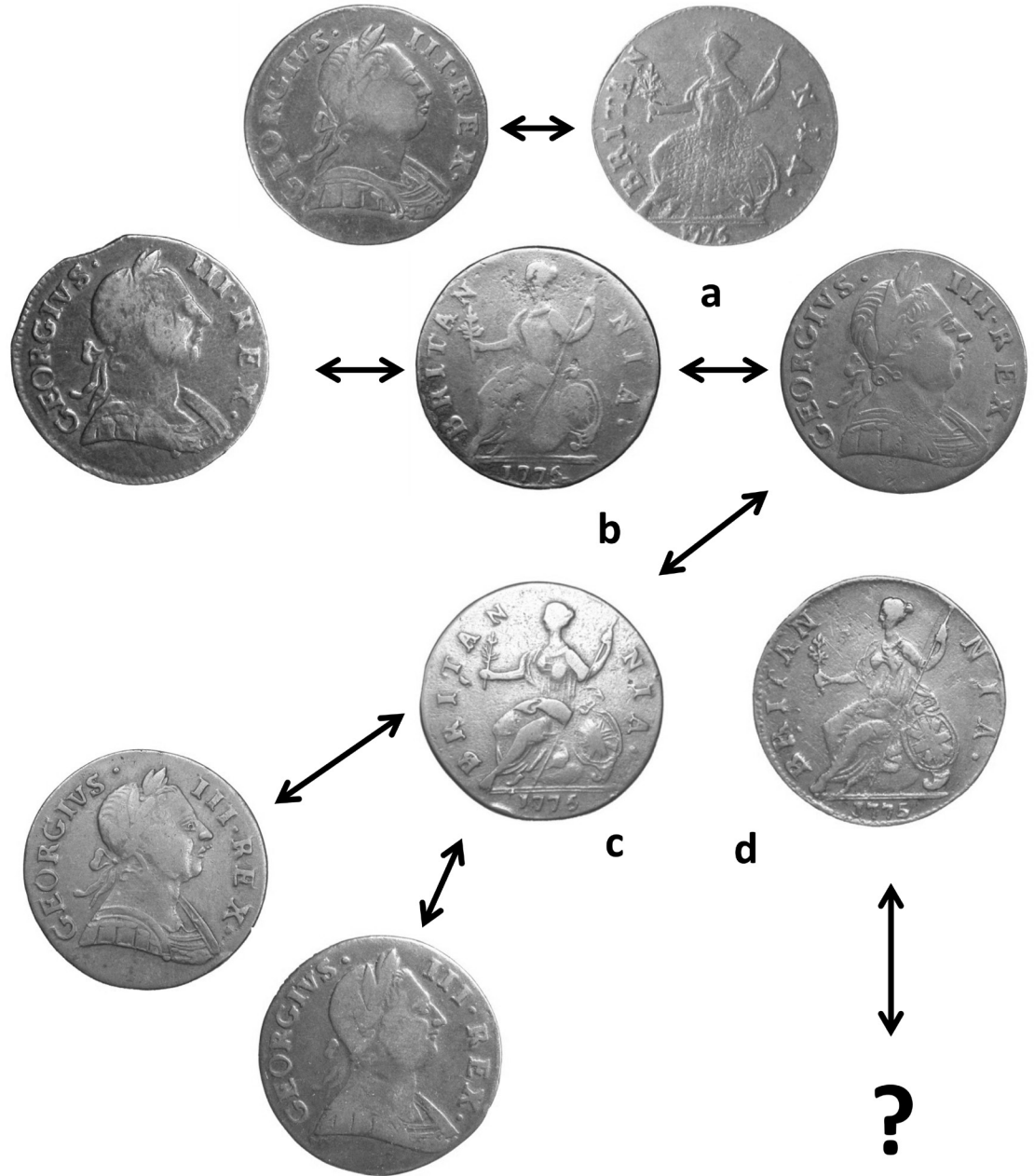


Plate 5: "Capped Head" Obverse Die States



EDS



LDS

Obverse 1



EDS



LDS

Obverse 3



EDS



LDS

Obverse 5



EDS



LDS

Obverse 6



EDS



MDS



LDS

Obverse 7

Plate 6: “Capped Head”/“Georgivs Triumpho” Reverse Die States



EDS



LDS



EDS



LDS

B Reverse

b Reverse



EDS



MDS



LDS

c Reverse



EDS



LDS

d Reverse

**“Flaming Sprig”:
A Family of Counterfeit Halfpence**

by
Roger A. Moore, MD; Moorestown, NJ

Introduction

Ongoing research into the large variety of British counterfeit halfpence by the internet-based Non-Regal Research Group (nonregalresearch@yahoogroups.com), continues to define new groupings of coins related by die sharing and style into Families. Although Clem Schettino and Byron Weston classified some 20 Families,¹ and many other Families have been studied,² we are still at the beginning of characterizing and documenting all the Families. One such Family is the “Flaming Sprig” Family. This Family was not described by Schettino and Weston, nor was an example listed in Anton and Kesse’s *The Forgotten Coins of the North American Colonies*.³ It was first brought to the attention of collectors in the early 2000s and labeled the “Flaming Sprig” Family due to the distinctive treatment of the sprig that gives the impression that it is on

fire (Fig. 1). In the course of discussions in the Non-Regal Research Group, the name was changed to the “Acorn Eye” Family because the eye of King George III resembled an acorn (Fig. 1). To date, five varieties have been identified that seem to fit into the Family and the Non-Regal Research group has changed the name back to the “Flaming Sprig” Family. However, not all members of the Family feature sprigs that appear to be fully ablaze.

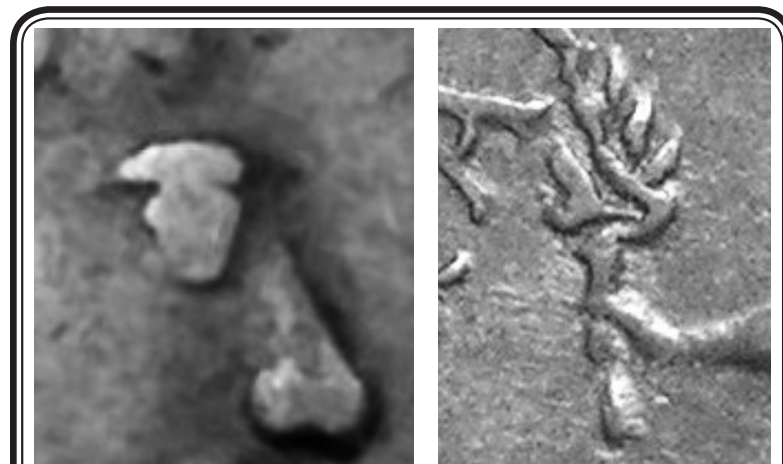


Figure 1. Details of a typical acorn-like eye (left) and a “flaming sprig.”
Courtesy of Ed Foster and John Louis.

Varieties

The Flaming Sprig Family is made up of five varieties minted from three separate obverses and four reverses. See Plate 1.

1 C. Schettino and B. Weston, *Categorization of Counterfeit British & Irish 1/2d & 1/4d of George II & III—A Preliminary Progress Report on Family Groups & Subgroups* (The Colonial Newsletter Foundation, Inc., 2002); C. Schettino and B. Weston, *Categorization of Counterfeit British & Irish 1/2d & 1/4d of George II & III—A Second Progress Report on Family Groups & Subgroups* (The Colonial Newsletter Foundation, Inc., 2006).

2 R. Moore, “The Lanky Letter Family of Counterfeit Halfpence,” *The Colonial Newsletter* (April 2010): 3521–3535; J. Louis, “Slopehead—Family of Counterfeit Halfpence,” *The C4 Newsletter* 16.3 (Fall 2008): 22.

3 W. T. Anton, Jr. and B. Kesse, *The Forgotten Coins of the North American Colonies* (Woodcliff Publishing Corp., 1990).

Obverses

All obverses show King George III facing right with an eye that has the shape of an acorn, although on obverse 2 this feature is very short and stubby. Legend lettering differs noticeably between varieties but there are some shared characteristics, such as the open Gs and large Os with broken tops found on all obverses. All the obverse royal portraits feature a pair of curls facing one another on the neck. Finally, the squiggly shape of the necklace and its centrally located and consistently round medallion is the same on all three obverse dies. The shoulder armor on all obverses is made up of five strips and the laurel wreath bows on the head are small with long ribbons.

Obverse 1: The primary obverse of the Flaming Sprig Family is obverse 1 since it is paired with all three reverses in the Family. The key characteristics of King George III are a pointed nose, fat lips, a small round chin and a clear acorn-like eye. The hair design is elaborate but not unlike the other obverses. The letters G correspond to those found on obverses 2 and 3 and the Es are similar to those found on obverse 3. The small size and normal shape of the X make it distinct from the treatments of this letter on the other obverse dies. This obverse is paired with reverses 73A, 73B, and 73C.

Obverse 2: On this obverse, the face of King George III appears old and sullen. His lips are thick, his nose is blunt, and his eye looks like a squat acorn. The legend departs from the style of the other obverse dies in its use of many large and sloppy letters. However, there is some similarity to obverse 3, especially the treatment of the letters G and X. This obverse is paired only with reverse 73C.

Obverse 3: This is the most commonly found obverse despite the fact that obverse 1 was used with three different reverses. At present, all the varieties involving obverse 1 do not equal the number known of the single variety with obverse 3, although the sample size is admittedly small. Obverse 3 bears the most similarity to obverse 2 with many oversized letters in the legend. The portrait of King George III is not very distinctive except for its very prominent acorn-like eye. Unlike obverse 2 with the squat acorn shape, the acorn-like eye on obverse 3 is elongated. This obverse is paired only with reverse 73D.

Reverses

All four reverses are dated 1773 with a larger than normal 3 and a small, J-like 1. All of them also depict Britannia facing left with similar treatments of the bun in her hair, the shield beside her. Britannia's drapery behind the left leg is also similar on all reverses except for 73A, where the dress folds are not as prominent, but this could be due to strike. Despite these similarities, the distinctive "flaming sprig" from which the Family derives its name is actually found in only three of the four reverses. It is also notable that the sprig appears to be burning in a different manner on each reverse. In the legends, the letters R, I, and T, all show bifurcation at the bottoms, but this is caused by strike pressure and is not a feature of the dies.

Reverse 73A: This is the only reverse in the family that lacks the "flaming sprig." However, other features firmly identify it as a member of the "Flaming Sprig" Family, rather than as a mule from some other Family. The formation of the date is nearly identical to that seen in reverses 73C and 73D. The legend letters also closely correspond, for the most part, to those used on reverse 73D—especially the thin letter A and the thin-topped letter T. This reverse is known only with obverse 1.

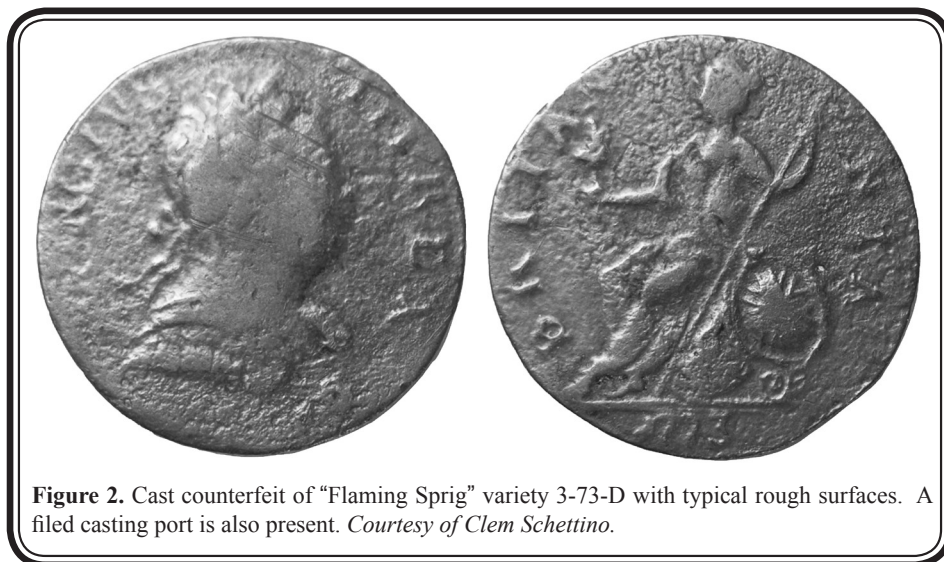
Reverse 73B: The date and the letter A, which seems to be more splayed at the base, somewhat dissimilar to those found on the other reverses. The remaining letters are also thicker than typically seen but this may be the result of wear and strike. Nevertheless, the shape of the shield and the folds of Britannia's dress are similar to those found on the other reverses. Thick flames seem to be leaping from the sprig in a manner unlike the other three reverses of this or any other known counterfeit Family. This reverse is paired only with obverse 1.

Reverse 73C: This is perhaps the most recognizable of the "Flaming Sprig" reverses. Here the sprig seems to be engulfed in flames. The lettering and numbering in the date is relatively crude but well defined. One should note the nearly exact duplication in the treatment of Britannia's knee between this reverse and both 73B and 73D. The fingers holding the staff are very prominent in high grade examples, as shown in the plate, as well as less well preserved specimens. This reverse is paired with both obverses 1 and 2.

Reverse 73D: This reverse also has a sprig which presents more of a sparkler effect than a sprig engulfed in flames. However, similarities in the treatment of the folds of Britannia's dress, the date numerals, and many legend letters indicate that this reverse belongs in the "Flaming Sprig" Family. It is also the most common of the varieties when paired with its only known obverse—obverse 3.

Oddity

Oddities in the "Flaming Sprig" Family are rare but a cast counterfeit of Variety 3-73D with a clear filed casting port is known (Fig. 2). The question of why someone would want to cast this most common variety in the "Flaming Sprig" Family is unanswered and will most likely never be answered. With a weight of only 106.5 grains this coin is significantly underweight compared to other known "Flaming Sprig" Family members (see Table 1, below), although its diameter of 28.5 mm corresponds to those of the struck members of the Family. Still, the small size of the sample makes it difficult to draw firm conclusions.



Metrology

Based on the combinations of the three obverse and four reverses a total of five varieties comprise the “Flaming Sprig” Family. A breakdown of these varieties is shown in Table 1 which also provides basic metrological and rarity data. With few exceptions, every variety in this Family is rare. For two varieties only two members are known (1-73A and 1-73C). Only 12 coins are known for the most common variety (3-73D). There appears to be no significant deviation in the weights or diameters of the coins within each variety, but again, the sample sizes are very small. Variety 1-73B appears to be generally lighter than the other varieties. All varieties were analyzed individually but also grouped together when calculating ranges and averages. The weight average was 125.7 grains with a range of 110 grains to 134.1 grains. The average diameter was 28.1 mm with a range of 26.7 mm to 29 mm. All measured coins were struck in “coin turn” orientation.

Table 1: The Metrology of the “Flaming Sprig” Family

Variety	Known Specimens	Average Weight	Weight Range	Coins Weighed	Average Diameter	Diameter Range	Coins Measured
1-73A	2	129.7	125.3–134.1	2	28.7	28.6–28.7	2
1-73B	4	119.8	110–126.1	4	28.1	26.7–28.9	4
1-73C	2	123.8	122.5–125	2	28.4	27.9–28.9	2
2-73C	8	123.4	114.7–131.8	8	28.1	28–28.5	8
3-73D	12	129.1	124.1–132.9	11	27.9	27.3–29	11
Total	28	125.7	110–134.1	27	28.1	26.7–29	27

Conclusions

The “Flaming Sprig” Family is a small Family comprised of 1773-dated King George III counterfeit halfpence. Although the Family name derives from the fact that most members feature Britannia holding a distinctive sprig that appears to be on fire, not all Family members have this characteristic. The royal portrait is also notable for the king’s acorn-shaped eye, although the size and shape of the acorn varies. Notwithstanding these differences, the Family is held together by similarities in the letters and numerals in the legends, in the treatment of the shield and Britannia’s drapery, as well as in the form of the bow, ribbon, and hair of King George III. All pieces are relatively rare and some are very rare at present. However, as with the study of all counterfeit halfpence Families, the expectation is that not only more of the known varieties will appear but also new varieties that will fit into the Family.

Acknowledgements

The sharing of images and information by members of the internet-based Yahoo Colonial-Coin and Non-Regal Research groups has made this paper possible. Special contributors of information and images include Bob Bowser, Michael Briggs, Dan Burleson, Ed Foster, John Louis, David Palmer, Rickie Rose, Mike Ringo (prior to his unfortunate and untimely death), Jeff Rock, Charles Rohrer, Clem Schettino, Kayla Schlemmer, and Vicken Yepegian. Much of the early work on this Family was documented by John Louis in a set of plates.

Plate Photo Credits

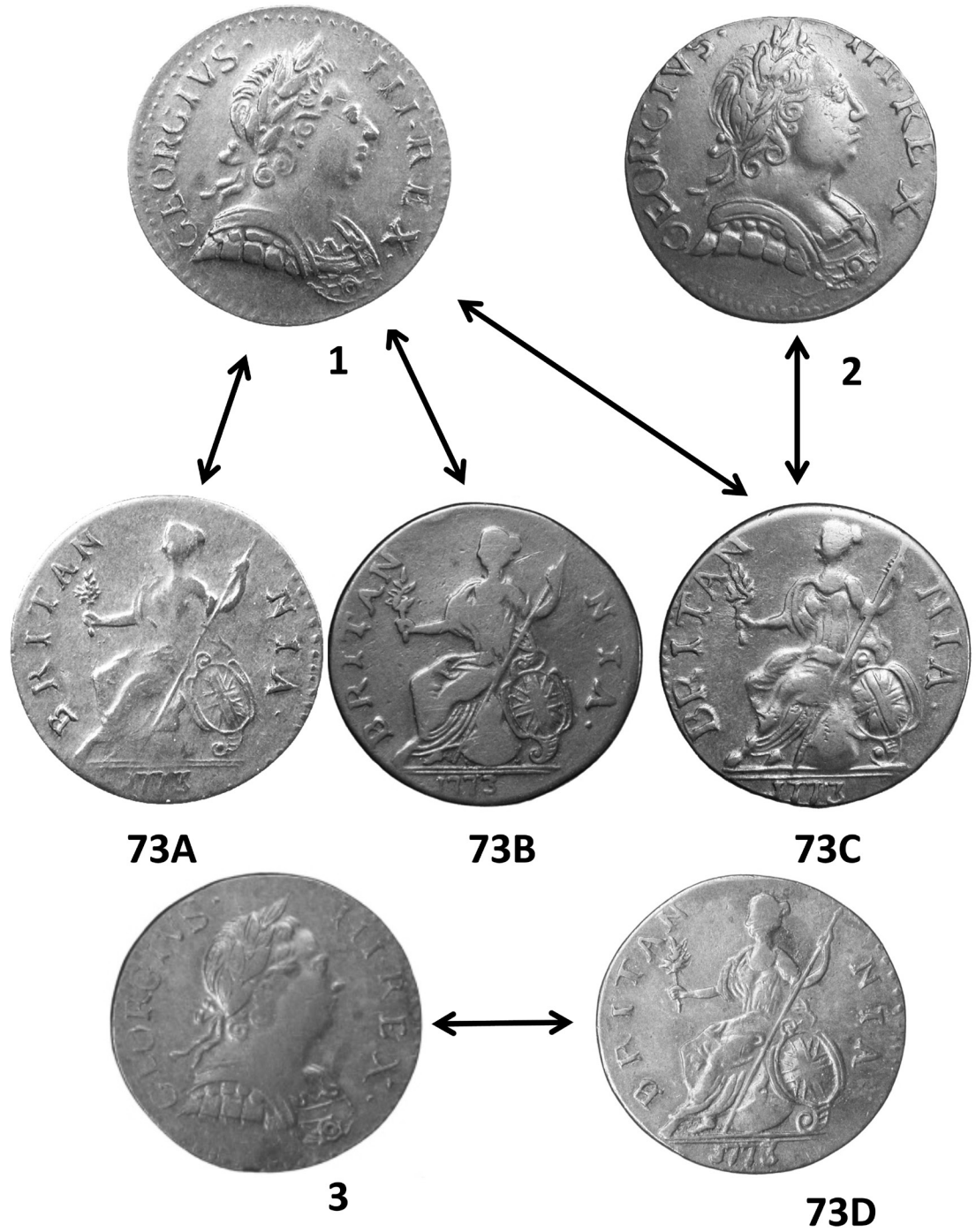
Obverses:

1. Ed Foster.
2. John Louis (ex Ringo).
3. Author (ex Schettino).

Reverses:

- 73A. Ed Foster.
73B. Author.
73C. John Louis (ex Ringo).
73D. Author (ex Schettino).

Plate 1: The “Flaming Sprig” Family



FUGIO COPPERS IN THE COLLECTION OF THE AMERICAN NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

Plate IV (Newman 12-Z to 15-Y) by

Oliver D. Hoover; Burlington, Ontario¹

Introduction

On April 21, 1787, the Continental Congress established a contract for producing a national copper coin in an attempt to combat the flood of lightweight counterfeit coppers that were damaging the economy. In the same year, on July 6, it was resolved that the new coin should weigh 157.5 grains and feature designs created by Benjamin Franklin for the Continental Currency dollar and fractional paper money in 1776. The obverse depicts a sundial with the mottoes, FUGIO ("I [viz. Time] Fly") and MIND YOUR BUSINESS, while thirteen linked rings, symbolizing the thirteen United States and the legend UNITED STATES, WE ARE ONE appear on the reverse.

Thanks to a large bribe to the head of the U.S. Treasury Board, the contract was awarded to James Jarvis, who was also involved with the production of Connecticut coppers. Jarvis had the dies cut by the Connecticut die maker, Abel Buell, but then found that he could only obtain locally thirty of the three hundred tons of copper he was required to convert into coin. He attempted to find the needed copper in England, while leaving his father-in-law, Samuel Broome, in charge of the minting operation. Broome used about four tons of the metal to produce some 400,000 FUGIO coppers, but used the remainder to produce lighter and more profitable Connecticut coppers. When the Congress discovered what had happened, it voided the contract on September 16, 1788, and subsequently resolved to seek restitution. Jarvis wisely decided to remain in Europe. His father-in-law soon joined him there after selling the mint equipment to the New York coiner and counterfeiter, Thomas Machin. Abel Buell also seems to have fled the United States after passing his tools on to his son, Benjamin.

The ANS collection of FUGIO coppers presently consists of some 59 specimens (not including restrikes and electrotypes). Fourteen of these were donated to the Society by the Bank of New York, in 1949. These coins come from the so-called Bank of New York hoard, consisting of a keg of FUGIO coppers obtained by the bank in 1788, but which was forgotten until 1856 and then again until 1926. In 1948, members of the ANS were permitted to study the remaining 1,641 pieces. Another 10 specimens were donated by Edward R. Barnsley, who is perhaps best known for his superlative collection of Connecticut coppers. The remaining part of the ANS FUGIO collection evolved organically over time.

This fourth plate in a series to fully publish the FUGIO coppers in the ANS cabinet includes two pieces from the Bank of New York hoard (Nos. 31 and 36). Two further specimens (Nos. 33 and 40) come from the 1963 Barnsley donation. Coin nos. 34 and 35 were purchased by the Society in 1911 and 1912, respectively. Three coins (Nos. 32 and 38–39) lack provenance information entirely.

In the variety sequence Newman 12-Z to 15-Y, the ANS currently lacks examples of 12-KK, 12-LL, 13-JJ, 13-KK, 14-O, and 15-V.

¹ The commentary and catalog have benefited from discussion with Philip Mossman and Jeff Rock.

Catalog

Obv. *FUGIO.* / *1787*. Sun shining on sundial. In exergue, MIND♦YOUR♦♦ BUSINESS.

Rev. UNITED * STATES * on raised ring. Within, WE ARE ONE. Thirteen linked rings inscribed with the names of the original United States.

Newman 12-Z

31. 28mm, 138.1 grains. Clashed obverse and reverse. ANS 1949.136.10.

Newman 13-N

32. 28mm, 159.8 grains. ANS 0000.999.28532.

Newman 13-R

33. 28mm, 152.4 grains. ANS 1963.103.6.

Newman 13-X

34. 28mm, 117.1 grains. ANS 1911.85.6.

35. 28mm, 153.8 grains. ANS 1912.999.25.

36. 28mm, 147.5 grains. ANS 1949.136.14.

Newman 14-X

37. 28mm, 155.2 grains. ANS 1962.32.3.

Newman 15-H

38. 28mm, 153.0 grains. ANS 0000.999.28533.

Newman 15-K

39. 28mm, 154.4 grains. ANS 0000.999.28534.

Newman 15-Y

40. 28mm, 159.26 grains. ANS 1963.103.7.

FUGIO COPPERS IN THE COLLECTION OF THE AMERICAN NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

Plate IV (Newman 12-Z to 15-Y)



31



32



33



34



35



36



37



38



39



40

CONNECTICUT COPPERS IN THE COLLECTION OF THE AMERICAN NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

**Plate IX: 1785
(Miller 7.2-D to 8-D)
by
Oliver D. Hoover; Burlington, Ontario¹**

Introduction

The Confederation period copper coinage of the state of Connecticut was legally struck in New Haven by the Company for Coining Coppers from November 12, 1785, to June 1, 1787. From June 1, 1787, to the Fall of 1788, Connecticut coppers continued to be struck by James Jarvis and Company. The types essentially consisted of modified versions of the royal bust obverse and Britannia reverse familiar from contemporary English halfpence. The Latin regal legends were replaced by new ones that identified the coppers as being issued by the authority of Connecticut (AUCTORI CONNEC) and advertised American independence and liberty (INDE ET LIB). This coinage was popular, spawning imitative issues struck for Vermont and numerous illegal counterfeits. The problem of counterfeiting combined with apparent mint irregularities led to a state inquest in January of 1789. On June 20, 1789, the right to produce state coppers for Connecticut was officially terminated by the federal government.

The collection of Connecticut coppers maintained by the American Numismatic Society may be one of the most complete in existence and contains the vast majority of the die varieties recorded in Henry C. Miller's *The State Coinage of Connecticut* (New York, 1920). The Society's Connecticut holdings are so extensive due to two major gifts in the early twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In 1931, the Frederick Canfield collection of Connecticut coppers (285 pieces) was loaned and subsequently donated to the ANS by the New Jersey Historical Society. In 2005, the American Numismatic Society acquired the Connecticut collection of Edward R. Barnsley (1131 pieces) thanks to the generosity of James C. Spilman and the Colonial Newsletter Foundation.

This ninth plate in a series to fully publish the Connecticut coppers in the ANS cabinet includes three pieces from the Canfield collection (Nos. 81–82 and 88) and six from the Barnsley/CNLF gift (Nos. 83–87, and 89). Coin no. 90 lacks any provenance information.

The Canfield coins all have white painted die varieties (PDV) on the obverse giving the respective Miller numbers. A very similar white PDV also appears on coin no. 90, which would strongly suggest that it is a Canfield piece that became disassociated with its provenance record early on.

¹ The commentary and catalog have benefited from discussion with Randy Clark and Philip Mossman.

Catalog

Obv. AUCTORI: CONNEC.: Laureate and cuirassed bust right, imitating regal halfpence of George III.

Rev. Legend as indicated. Liberty/Columbia/Connecticut seated left on globe, holding olive branch and pole topped by liberty cap; grounded shield with state arms (three grape vines) beside. In exergue, 1785.

Miller 7.1-D

81. 28mm, 132.1 grains. INDE: -:- ET LIB:. Painted Miller die variety on obverse (7 D in left field and M on right). ANS 1931.58.432.

Miller 7.2-D

82. 28mm, 128.7 grains. INDE: -:- ET LIB:. Painted Miller die variety on obverse (7²D in left field and M on right). ANS 1931.58.433.
83. 28mm, 120.2 grains. INDE: -:- ET LIB:. ANS 2005.37.27.
84. 28mm, 127.6 grains. INDE: -:- ET LIB:. ANS 2005.37.28.
85. 28mm, 115.7 grains. INDE: -:- ET LIB:. ANS 2005.37.92.
86. 28mm, 125.1 grains. INDE: -:- ET LIB:. ANS 2005.37.93.

Miller 7.3-D

87. 28mm, 123.6 grains. INDE: -:- ET LIB:. ANS 2005.37.412.

Miller 8-D

88. 29mm, 127.7 grains. INDE: -:- ET LIB:. Painted Miller die variety on obverse (8 D in left field and M on right). ANS 1931.58.434.
89. 29mm, 131.3 grains. INDE: -:- ET LIB:. ANS 2005.37.413.
90. 29mm, 137.1 grains. INDE: -:- ET LIB:. ANS 0000.999.19826.

CONNECTICUT COPPERS IN THE COLLECTION OF
THE AMERICAN NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

Plate IX: 1785
(Miller 7.2-D to 8-D)



81



82



83



84



85



86



87



88



89



90

NEW JERSEY COPPERS IN THE COLLECTION OF THE AMERICAN NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

Plate IX: 1787 (Maris 38-Y to 38-c)

by

Oliver D. Hoover; Burlington, Ontario¹

Introduction

The partnership of Walter Mould, Thomas Goadsby, and Albion Cox received a two-year contract to produce three million copper coins for the state of New Jersey on June 1, 1786. Their coins carried the obverse type of a horse head and plow derived from the state seal and an American shield on the reverse. The legends give the Latin name of the state (NOVA CAESAREA) and present the national motto of the United States (E PLURIBUS UNUM) for the first time on any coin. By the Fall of 1786 the partners had fallen into disagreement and divided the coinage quota between a mint operated by Goadsby and Cox at Rahway, near Elizabethtown (now Elizabeth), NJ, and another operated by Mould near Morristown, NJ. Further problems developed in 1788. Mould ceased his involvement with the coinage at this time and Cox faced litigation by his creditors and by Goadsby, which resulted in the seizure of the mint equipment. By the middle of the year, the remainder of the coining contract and the Rahway mint equipment had been obtained by Matthias Ogden, the primary mover behind the New Jersey coinage legislation. Despite having access only to dies dated 1786 and 1787, Ogden continued to strike New Jersey coppers at his barn in Elizabethtown until as late as 1790.

The American Numismatic Society's holdings of New Jersey coppers are extensive, thanks to the New Jersey Historical Society's donation of duplicates from the Frederick Canfield collection (24 pieces) in 1931 and the purchase of a large part of the Harry Prescott Clark Beach collection (829 pieces) from Henry Grünthal in 1945. Grünthal, who had studied numismatics in Germany, later went on to become Assistant to the Chief Curator and Curator of European and Modern Coins at the ANS from 1953 to 1973. Most of the die varieties identified by Edward Maris in *A Historic Sketch of the Coins of New Jersey* (Philadelphia, 1881) may be found in the ANS collection.

On this ninth plate in a series to fully publish the New Jersey coppers belonging to the American Numismatic Society, five coins (Nos. 84–85 and 88–89) come from the 1945 Beach/Grünthal purchase. Two further pieces (Nos. 81 and 86) were purchased from Henry Grünthal in 1974. Coin no. 87 was purchased in 1944 from W. F. Webb together with a 1795 U.S. half cent overstruck on a Talbot, Allum, and Lee token and another New Jersey copper (No. 74). Only one coin (No. 82) lacks any provenance information.

¹ The commentary and catalog have benefited from discussion with Philip Mossman, Roger Siboni, and Raymond Williams.

Catalog

Obv. NOVA CÆSAREA, around. Head of horse right, above plow right; in exergue, 1787.

Rev. *E*PLURIBUS*UNUM*, around. American shield emblazoned with a field of argent, six pales gules, and a chief azure.

Maris 38-Y

81. 29mm, 150.0 grains. ANS 1974.177.11.

82. 29mm, 173.1 grains. ANS 00000.999.28479.

Maris 38-Z

83. 29mm, 138.2 grains. ANS 1931.58.517.

84. 29mm, 168.6 grains. ANS 1945.42.699.

85. 29mm, 133.3 grains. ANS 1945.42.700.

86. 29mm, 145.5 grains. ANS 1974.177.12.

Maris 38-a

87. 29mm, 158.3 grains. ANS 1944.64.3.

Maris 38-b

88. 29mm, 127.6 grains. ANS 1945.42.695.

89. 29mm, 142.7 grains. ANS 1945.42.696.

Maris 38-c

90. 29mm, 152.0 grains. ANS 1945.42.697.

NEW JERSEY COPPERS IN THE COLLECTION OF
THE AMERICAN NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

Plate IX: 1787
(Maris 38-Y to 38-c)



81



82



83



84



85



86



87



88



89



90

MASSACHUSETTS BAY SILVER IN THE COLLECTION OF THE AMERICAN NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

Plate II: Willow Tree Silver (Noe 1-A to III-C / Salmon 1-A to 3-D)

by
Oliver D. Hoover; Burlington, Ontario¹

Introduction

On May 26–27, 1652, the Massachusetts General Court issued Acts for the establishment of a silver mint in Boston as a measure of protection against the increasing problem of light weight Spanish-American cobs circulating in Massachusetts Bay. The Boston silversmiths, John Hull and Robert Sanderson were appointed to operate the mint. They were required to produce coins of sterling (.925) fineness in English denominations, but at a reduced weight standard of 72 grains to the shilling. The official weight of the contemporary English shilling was 92.9 grains.

Between 1652 and 1682, Hull and Sanderson struck four series of silver coins for Massachusetts Bay. The earliest of these, produced in June–October 1652, consisted of crude, blank planchets marked with two stamps: NE for New England on the obverse and a value mark in Roman numerals on the reverse. Legislation was passed, on October 19, 1652, to abandon this simple design in favor of a more coin-like design produced by full-size dies. The obverse of the new coinage featured a willow tree, while the English legend, MASATHVSETS IN / NEW ENGLAND AN DOM was placed in the border, broken between the obverse and reverse. The 1652 date of the original mint legislation and the value indicator also appeared in the center of the reverse. The willow tree coinage continued in production until c. 1660 or 1662, when the willow on the obverse was replaced by an oak tree. The change in tree was also accompanied by a change in production technology. While the willow tree coinage had been struck by hand, the new oak tree series was struck in a rocker arm press. In c. 1667, the tree was again changed, this time from an oak to a pine. The pine tree coinage—the most enduring of the Massachusetts silver series—was struck until 1682, when the mint contract expired. Hull died the following year. Although sporadic attempts were made to revive the mint until 1690, these were quashed by the restored Stewart kings, Charles II (1659–1685) and James II (1685–1688), and finally put to rest by the increased value of silver and restored confidence in Spanish-American coins at the end of the 1680s.

The cabinet of the American Numismatic Society is home to some 151 authentic pieces of Massachusetts Bay silver of all four series, as well as a large selection (70 pieces) of electrotypes and fakes. The core of the collection is almost certainly the 51 pieces donated by the prominent New York collector, William B. Osgood Field, in 1946. The ANS collection includes most of the varieties identified by Sydney P. Noe in his three major studies: *The New England and Willow Tree Coinage* (1943), *The Oak Tree Coinage of Massachusetts* (1947), and *The Pine Tree Coinage of Massachusetts* (1952), as well as in Christopher Salmon's recent review and reassessment of the coinage, *The Silver Coins of Massachusetts* (2011).

¹ The commentary and catalog have benefited from discussion with Louis Jordan, Philip Mossman, and Christopher Salmon.

This second plate in a series to fully publish the Massachusetts Bay silver coins belonging to the American Numismatic Society features the complete ANS holdings of Willow Tree silver. All of the coins entered the cabinet by purchase. The shillings were bought from such well-known dealers and companies as B. A. Seaby (No. 11), O. E. Futter (No. 12), and the St. Louis Coin & Stamp Company (Nos. 14–15). The Futter piece had previously appeared as lot 2362 in the 1952 ANA Sale and the first St. Louis coin has a provenance going back to the eminent colonial numismatist of the nineteenth century, Dr. Thomas Hall. Coin no. 13 was obtained in the Blue-stone Sale. The sixpence (No. 16) and the threepence (No. 17) were purchased as duplicates from the H. E. Gillingham collection. The threepence has the distinction of previously belonging to another famous nineteenth-century numismatist: Charles I. Bushnell.

Catalog

Shillings

Noe 1-A/Salmon 1-A

Obv. Willow tree. MASATHVSETS·IN· around.

Rev. 1652 XII in center. NEW ENGLAND :AN DOM : around.

11. 28mm, 69.4 grains. Double struck. ANS 1958.2.1.

Noe 2-A/Salmon 2-A

Obv. Willow tree. MASATHVSETS : IN : around.

Rev. 1652 XII in center. AN DOM : NEW ENGLAND.: around.

12. 29mm, 67.7 grains. ANS 1953.161.1.

Noe 3-D/Salmon 3-D

Obv. Willow tree. MASATHVSETS : IN around.

Rev. 1652 XII in center. AN DOM : NEW ENGLAND. around.

13. 25mm, 53.5 grains. Clipped. ANS 1942.137.2.

14. 28mm, 70.9 grains. ANS 1944.61.1.

Noe 3-E/Salmon 3-E

Obv. Willow tree. MASATHVSETS : IN around.

Rev. 1652 XII in center. NEW ENGLAND. AN DOM : around.

15. 28mm, 70.0 grains. ANS 1942.22.1.

Sixpence

Noe 1-A/Salmon 1-A

Obv. Willow tree. MASATHVSETS·IN : around.

Rev. 1652 VI in center. NEW ENGLAND·A DOM : around.

16. 23mm, 37.8 grains. ANS 1944.80.1.

Threepence

Noe 1-A/Salmon 1-A

Obv. Willow tree. MASATHVSETS·IN· around.

Rev. 1652 VI in center. NEW ENGLAND·A·D : around.

17. 15.5mm, 16.9 grains. ANS 1944.79.1.

**MASSACHUSETTS BAY SILVER IN THE COLLECTION OF
THE AMERICAN NUMISMATIC SOCIETY**

**Plate II: Willow Tree Silver
(Noe 1-A to 3-D / Salmon 1-A to 3-D)**



11



12



13



14



15



16



17

